

City of Milpitas
Unapproved Minutes
Telecommunications Commission
July 21, 2003

I. Call to Order & Roll Call:

Chair Alcorn called the meeting to order.

Members Present: A. Alcorn, P. Peterson, N. Gupta, I. Munir, W. Lam, P. Gupta; R. Gopalara D. Gupta, G. Ali-Santosa, A. Ettinger

I.S. Staff: B. Marion, E. Pasion City Council: A. Gomez

Members Absent, V. Mathur

II. Pledge of Allegiance:

The Commission recited The Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Announcements:

No announcements made for the record.

IV. Approval of the Agenda:

Motion to approve the agenda as submitted.

M/S N. Gupta/G. Santosa Ayes: 10

**V. Approval of the Minutes
June 16, 2003**

Chair Alcorn noted that the date was June 16, 2002 on the agenda and noted a change.

Motion to approved the minutes as submitted.

M/S N. Gupta/R. Gopalarao Ayes: 10

VI. Citizen's Forum

Milpitas resident, Mike Fitzjarrell, was concerned with landscape companies placing sample packages in private driveways, which eventually litter the sidewalks.

VII. Continued-New Business:

1. Comcast Cable Public Input on Franchise.

CIO Bill Marion provided a summary of the objectives of seeking public input on the cable franchise. The comments would be incorporated in the final document to be submitted for final review.

For the record, Chair Alcorn added that City Council member Althea Polanski submitted a letter outlining her concerns with Comcast's cable. She cited in a letter numerous outages that has affected her ability to use their services.

Chair Alcorn welcomed members of the audience to provide comments on the current cable television franchise with Comcast.

Milpitas Planning Commissioner Cliff Williams was concern on the ability for Comcast to maintain its above ground service boxes. Mr. Williams noted that throughout the years that the cable services boxes have been constructed out of plastic or metal materials. Some cable boxes have not been maintained properly over the years and have become potential safety hazards to residents and homeowners.

Mr. Williams also noted that the picture quality on his analog cable service at the higher end cable channels are not coming in clear and reception is poor at best. He hopes that Comcast would investigate into improving the quality of its service to Milpitas subscribers. Chair Alcorn wanted to have the information sent to staff for locations of the broken cable boxes.

Mr. Tim Kiphuth, 1636 Serpa Drive, Milpitas, was concerned with Comcast's billing method noting that he was unfairly charged for services. Specifically, the fee structure and number connections in charged to him. Mr. Kiphuth noted that he had existing cable in his home. Comcast charged his service for two cable line based on the number of television sets he owned. The overcharge was eventually corrected after numerous discussions with Comcast customer service.

He also reiterated the problems of broken and unkempt cable boxes that Planning Commission Cliff Williams stated earlier.

Mr. Kiputh suggested that the city consider a city satellite service as an alternative to the cable company. Services such as DSS or the Dish Network services provide a far greater variety of programming and service.

Mike Fitzjarrell, 1354 Stemel Way, also added the current cable provided has not been providing its services as advertised.

Kurt Bohan was concerned that the City of Milpitas did not have a cable access channel for the public's use. He equated it as a form of visual literacy that is important for diverse growth on local communications. By having a local access channel allows the community to advocate local causes and issues.

He is advocating that the City of Milpitas establishing a local cable channel for the community access. He noted that other options exist for more great access.

Matter of free speech as a modern form of communications and public access cable would be the appropriate forum for the public to give its opinions.

Mr. Bohan noted that he has established a website www.milpitastv.org to gather interest and in put.

Seeing no further comments from the public, Chair Alcorn requested a motion on this agenda item from the Commission.

Motion to note, receipt and file.

M/S N. Gupta/D. Gupta

Ayes: 10

2. Jan-Feb Meeting Times and By-Laws.

Chair noted that changes were required to the Commission's by-laws involving its new meeting time. Staff provided a copy of the document.

No further comments on the changes of the document were made.

Motion to note, receipt and file.

M/S N. Gupta/D. Gupta

Ayes: 10

3. Update of cable franchise Comcast Cable.

CIO, Bill Marion, provided a summary of current activities involving the cable television franchise with Comcast cable.

Several accomplishments included review of the franchise documents and city ordinance involving the Milpitas cable franchise. Completed the technical review of the Milpitas cable system.

In progress are the web and telephone survey. Review of the fee audit payments from Comcast. Completed the technical review of the Milpitas cable system. Requirement document from the Milpitas Unified School District for a needs assessment; establishing and or reinforcing customer service standards

A final report will be incorporated to the overall document to be added to the needs assessment.

Commissioner Gopal Rao asked if the City's telecommunications master plan was incorporated in the cable franchise review.

Councilmember Gomez noted programs should be set up for seniors offering discounts and the ability of controlling rates for cable customers.

Vice Chair N. Gupta asked of the cable franchise timeline of completion and the technical review.

Commissioner Gopal Rao asked of survey numbers taken from the website responses and its ratio of interest to other areas of the City's internet site.

Commission D. Gupta noted that more work was needed to improve the cable signal quality to cable customers in Milpitas.

Commission Gopal Rao added that the Moss and Barnett report added insight to the overall technical review of the cable system in Milpitas.

Motion to note, receipt and file.

M/S N. Gupta/D. Gupta

Ayes: 10

4. June '03 Monthly I.S. Report

CIO, Bill Marion, gave a summary on the activities of the Information Services Department for the month of June.

One major highlight was the integration and debut of Internet web streaming of City Council and Planning Commission meetings through the City's web site. Staff demonstrated to the Commission the current video files of archived public meetings on the City's web site. Staff also reported that the audio portion of the meeting was broadcasted live on the City's radio station 1620 AM.

Staff reported work continues on the city's CAD system and site visitation of potential vendors; the City's GIS system is being sought after as a prototype for the State of California; the new electronic message board near city hall is operational along westbound Calaveras Boulevard. Megan's Law database information on the city's web site.

Chair Alcorn asked of the status of the wireless communications network. Staff reported on the current installation.

Chair Alcorn asked what the possibilities are establishing a wireless communications network in Milpitas in provided broadband. Staff is researching the various methods and distribution types that are currently offered.

Vice Chair Gupta noted that he has a vendor who would be able to present its offerings and wireless communications network.

Commission Lam reiterated the need for Comcast to give another presentation to the Commission.

Commission Gopal Rao asked if other city commission meetings on the web streaming activities. Staff noted it contracted to cover City Council and Planning Commission meetings and limited to storage for those meetings.

Motion to note receipt and file.

M/S N. Gupta/V. Mathur

Ayes: 7

5. Round Table Discussion.

Vice Chair N. Gupta reiterated that he would provide staff with information for the next Commission meeting for the wireless communications services.

VIII. Adjournment of Meeting

Chair Alcorn requested a motion to adjourn to Monday, August 18, 2003.

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